Message Text

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USEEC

E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: ETRD, EEC

SUBJECT: COMMISSION REQUEST FOR INFORMATION ON HOUSE BILL

- 1. EC COMMISSION (LOERKE, DG-1) HAS ASKED ON URGENT BASIS FOR INFORMATION AND USG POSITION ON A BILL INTRODUCED BY CONGRESSMAN GLENN ANDERSON AND OTHER REPRESENTATIVES FROM CALIFORNIA. ACCORDING TO COMMISSION, THIS BILL, HR 81-24, WOULD PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO AMERICAN AIRLINE COMPANIES NEEDING TO ADAPT THEIR AIRCRAFT TO MEET FEDERAL NOISE STANDARDS. A FUND WOULD BE CREATED THROUGH A SURTAX ON SALES OF AIRLINE TICKETS IN THE US. AIRLINE COMPANIES COULD USE THE FUND TO PURCHASE NEW AIRCRAFT AND PARTS, AS LONG AS MORE THAN 50 PERCENT OF THE VALUE OF THESE AIRCRAFT AND PARTS WERE OF US MANUFACTURE.
- 2. COMMISSION AND OTHER MEMBER STATES LEARNED OF US BILL FROM FRENCH REPRESENTATIVE TO MEETING OF COMMITTEE OF PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES (COREPER) ON JULY 20. FRENCH TOLD COREPER THAT FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER WOULD RAISE THE SUBJECT AT FOREIGN MINISTERS COUNCIL ON LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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JULY 26. FRENCH POSITION IS THAT BILL WOULD CREATE A NEW BUY-AMERICAN PROVISION IN A KEY INDUSTRY. MOREOVER, SURTAX WOULD BE LEVIED ON ALL TICKET SALES, INCLUDING THOSE BY FOREIGN COMPANIES OPERATING IN US, EVEN THOUGH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE WOULD BE DENIED IF US AIRLINES WERE TO PURCHASE OTHER THAN NON-AMERICAN AIRCRAFT PARTS. FRENCH REPORTEDLY TOLD COREPER THAT

THEY SEE THIS BILL AS AIMED AGAINST PURCHASE OF AIRBUS IN PARTICULAR.

3. COMMISSION SOURCE TELLS US THAT OTHER MEMBER STATES EXPRESSED SURPRISE AND DISMAY AT THIS INFORMATION. COMMISSION NEEDS TO BRIEF VICE-PRESIDENT HAFERKAMP BEFORE COUNCIL MEETING AND WOULD APPRECIATE USG POSITION ON BILL AND ESTIMATE OF ITS CHANCE OF ADOPTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, PREFERABLY BY JULY 22. MISSION WOULD APPRECIATE EARLY GUIDANCE. HINTON

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